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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Ghana

Addendum

Information provided by Ghana in follow-up to the concluding observations*

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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Stereotypes and harmful practices

1. **The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure the swift closure of all remaining "witch camps" and that alleged witches are provided with adequate rehabilitation and safe reinsertion into their communities or with alternative housing and livelihood options. Specific steps should also be taken to protect the rights of all girls who have grown up in such camps, including by ensuring that they are provided with rehabilitation, safely reintegrated into their families and communities and given access to high-quality education and vocational training (see CEDAW/C/GHA/CO/6-7, para 25).**

2. A Committee on the Disbandment of Camps and Reintegration of alleged witches was established in 2014 to assess the "witch camps" for closure, rehabilitate and reintegrate the alleged witches into their communities. To achieve this, the Committee engaged the Regional House of Chiefs for their support.

3. The Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service (GPS), the Commission on Human Right and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Committee on the Disbandment of Camps and Reintegration of alleged witches supported and provided Six (6) accused women with legal services and integrated them into communities of their choice.

4. On 15th December, 2014 the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in collaboration with Action Aid Ghana successfully closed down the Bonyashe witch camp in the Northern Region and the inmates integrated into the society. As at the end of 2014, a total of 159 accused women were reintegrated into the society. Between the periods of 2016 to 2017, a total of 21 accused women from the Kuluo camp were also reintegrated into communities of their choice.

5. In 2015, the Northern Regional House of Chiefs constituted a Committee in the House with the mandate to delve into the reintegration of these vulnerable women into society.

6. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection through its Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme since 2015 provided 751 beneficiaries in the Gambaga, Kukuo, Nabuli, Kpatinga, Leli-Daberi and Ngani-Yendi witch camps with bi-monthly cash grant to smoothen their consumption as well as improve the Livelihood of the accused women.

7. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection has developed a roadmap for the disbandment of all witch camps and is currently in discussion with Religious Leaders, Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and other Stakeholders to find sustainable approaches to end this practice in the Ghanaian society.

Violence against women

8. **The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure the effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 2007, including by expeditiously adopting enabling legislation, and to increase the human and financial resources for the implementation of the National Policy (see CEDAW/C/GHA/CO/6-7, para 27 (a)).**

9. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection as part of the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 has been organising advocacy and public sensitisation programmes in the communities. These programmes, which

are organised in the local Ghanaian languages are done through open fora, group discussions, television and radio.

10. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection also annually celebrates the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence to create awareness and curb the menace.

11. The Ministry of Finance continues to increase the budgetary allocation of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to effectively and efficiently implement the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 and the National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage.

12. As part of the implementation of the Strategic Framework on ending Child Marriage, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection has engaged Members of Parliament, Judges, Officers of CHRAJ, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), DOVVSU, Ghana Police Service, Ghana Health Service, Ghana Education Service, Ministry of Chieftaincy and the Media on their role in addressing Child Marriage in Ghana.

13. Over 1000 copies of factsheets on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and the Domestic Violence Act were printed and distributed to the public as part of the Ministry's Campaign to eradicate these phenomena.

14. As part of efforts to strengthen coordination among Social Protection programmes, the Social Protection Single Window Citizens Service was established in 2017 by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. Under this new initiative, a Single Window Call Centre (Helpline of Hope) was set-up and operationalized to receive and address complaints of Domestic Violence and other social menace. As at now, 635 cases have been received out of which 532 have been addressed.

15. The Ghana Police Service in its effort to decentralise the DOVVSU office to effectively combat gender based violence, established 107 DOVVSU offices in all 10 regions of the country. The DOVVSU under the Ghana Police Service currently has a staff strength of 767.

16. **The Committee calls upon the State party to intensify efforts to prevent and systematically punish all forms of violence against women and girls by ensuring that complaints are fully and effectively investigated and that perpetrators are brought to justice (see CEDAW/C/GHA/CO/6-7, para 27 (b)).**

17. The DOVVSU, with enhanced capacity have constantly intensified efforts to bring all perpetrators of Gender Based Violence to justice. A total number of 106 convictions were made in 2014, 139 in 2015, 140 in 2016 and 51 in 2017.

18. **The Committee calls upon the State party to provide systematic and mandatory capacity-building for judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers and health-care providers, to ensure that victims of violence are dealt with in a gender-sensitive manner (see CEDAW/C/GHA/CO/6-7, para 27 (c)).**

19. The Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, over the years have conducted a series of capacity building training programmes for prosecutors, lawyers and Police Officers in the areas of Human Rights, Women Peace and Security, Adolescent Reproductive Health, Intra Agency Protocol on Domestic Violence, Units Structures, Building Dockets on Gender-Based Violence cases, Child Protection and the effective prosecution of cases of gender-based violence.